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TAGS: OPRC KMDR TU PREL KPAO
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2009

In Today's Papers

Davutoglu to Brief Political Parties on Armenia
Television channels report the Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) said in a statement Foreign Minister Davutoglu will meet with the Speaker of Turkish parliament Mehmet Ali Sahin and the leaders of Turkish political parties in order to update them on Turkish-Armenian relations, recent developments in the Caucasus and other current foreign policy matters. Davutoglu met with Sahin on Friday.

Turkey and EU Discuss Energy
Media outlets report European Commission said Turkey and the EU have started negotiations on Thursday for Turkey's accession to the Energy Community. A Turkish delegation led by Yusuf Yazar, Deputy Undersecretary for Energy, met with a European Commission negotiating team headed by Fabrizio Barbaso, Deputy Director General for Energy, in Vienna. EU Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs said, "Turkey is carrying out fundamental reforms in order to address its huge energy challenge. Turkey is well prepared and has an important role to play in the Energy Community."

EU Warns Fine on Dogan Group Could Impact Turkey Progress Report (Hurriyet)
Following personal statements of EU Commissioner for enlargement Olli Rehn and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, the EU released an official report warning that the fine imposed on Dogan Media Group could affect the forthcoming Progress Report on Turkey's EU entry bid, to be released October 14. A spokesman for the European Commission said, "When the sanction is of such magnitude that it threatens the very existence of an entire press group, like in this case, then freedom of the press is at stake."

Dogan Media Group Fine

Mehmet Yilmaz wrote in mainstream Hurriyet: "The fine against the media group is a clear effort to silence some strong opposition voice but also indicates the way Turkish democracy is heading towards. Turkey is turning into a Central Asian Republic style democracy with one-man strong ruling. Once the ruling AKP finalizes the judicial reform like the way they want, steps for authoritarian ruling will be completed."

Mehmet Barlas wrote in mainstream Sabah: "Turkish media history is full of changed ownership stories and there is nothing to be pleased about seeing a media figure fading away. The best way for media is to take a lesson from the past and stand solidly on liberal democracy, fair competition and rule of law principles regardless of the current political situation in any given time."

Riza Turmen wrote in mainstream Milliyet: "The government's fine against media group demonstrates intolerance to certain views as well as intolerance to criticism. It seems the ruling AKP is missing the very essence of democracy."

Police Detains Friday 14 DTP Members in Diyarbakir (Hurriyet Website)

Mainstream Hurriyet website reports Friday that Diyarbakir police launched operations in the province and anti-terror teams launched operations against the DTP members Friday morning in Diyarbakir. Police raided homes, detaining 14 people:

- Former DTP Baglar District Mayor (DTP) Yurdusev Ozsokmenler, in Diyarbakir
- Former Bismil District Mayor (DTP), in Diyarbakir
- Diyarbakir Provincial General Assembly Chairman Sehmus Bayhan (DTP)
- Deputy General Secretary of the Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality Huseyin Bayrak,
- Deputy Mayor of Kayapinar District Mayor Sebahattin Dinc, in Diyarbakir
- Deputy Mayor of Yenisehir District Mayor Ihsan Ugur, in Diyarbakir

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- Yenisehir District Municipality Assembly Member Kenan Kaya, in Diyarbakir
- DTP Women's Assembly members: Azize Yagiz, Gulistan Aksoy, and Melike Karagoz
- SELIS Women's Center Activist Sociologist Behice Ok
- DTP Staff Member Huseyin Eren

Debate on Kurdish Initiative

Yasin Dogan wrote in Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak: "The government's initiative is not exempt from hearing other opinions and approaches, however the opposition parties prefer nothing but populist rhetoric.

It will be most useful if they think rationally and produce alternative ideas regarding how to address the problem."

Murat Yetkin wrote in liberal-intellectual Radikal: "Turkey is standing on a critical turning point as the government works on a Kurdish initiative. At the same time, there are more signs to believe that government is becoming more aware of the importance of military's input in this process. In fact the only successful outcome of the process goes through a public opinion effort to present this initiative as a joint military-government project."

YOK Approves Kurdish Studies within Artuklu University
Papers report the Higher Education Board (YOK) has approved the establishment of "Living Languages Institute" within Mardin's Artuklu University, albeit only for master's and doctorate studies. YOK President Yusuf Ziya Ozcan said the institute will not only provide education in Kurdish, but also in Farsi, Arabic and Assyrian.

Liberal Radikal reports the Education Ministry has decided to name a state high school in the city of Van after Ahmed Hani, a Kurdish historian and literary figure from the 17th century. The Governor of Van reportedly approved the decision.

Anniversary of 9/11

Media coverage is varied with some focusing on the absence of a physical monument in New York City, others reminding that Osama Bin Laden is still a fugitive, and others who see recently released photos of the accused 9/11 mastermind as a sign of Al Qaeda propaganda and a possible sign of a new attack on the horizon. Mainstream NTV notes, "Eight years after the attack on the World Trade Center in New York, there are plans to build something to

memorialize the victims, but the site of Ground Zero remains empty."

Mainstream Sabah reports in "Retirees Hired to Find Bin Laden," that, "The CIA Has Called Its Former Workers Back to Duty," as, "The British newspaper The Times reports a CIA team of 100 people have been searching for Bin Laden for eight years," and the paper says, "This team doesn't include people who know the languages of the region or who are experts on the region." Meanwhile, mainstream Hurriyet carries the latest photo of accused 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed under the headline, "Is This Photograph the Sign of a New Attack?" as, "The new photograph is creating concerns it may be an indication of new attacks." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports in, "The Latest Photograph of The Architect of 9/11," that, "The publication of the photo, taken by the Red Cross, is being broadcast by Al Qaeda-linked websites as propaganda."

Claims of Clashes in Karabakh (Hurriyet)

Media express alarm over indications that, at a time with Turkey and Armenia are seeking rapprochement, a ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan may have been broken yesterday. Mainstream Milliyet reports in "Alarm: News of Clashes Comes From Karabakh," that, "As the region experiences a period positive developments, Armenian and Azeri soldiers clash in the Karabakh region and five Armenian soldiers are killed." Mainstream Sabah reports, "The clashes took place for two hours before Armenian soldiers retreated." Mainstream Hurriyet notes, "Private Azerbaijani news agency APA reported that five Armenian soldiers were killed," but Hurriyet points out, "The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry did not comment on the developments."

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Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak headlines, "A Crisis Between Armenia and Azerbaijan." CNN Turk reports Turkish MFA Spokesperson Murat Ozugergin expressed "concern" over the reports of what CNN Turk calls, "the outbreak of violence in the ceasefire region." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet headlines, "A Bloody Clash in Karabakh."

New Pew Poll Indicates Muslims Are Among Those Most Discriminated Against

Islamist-oriented Zaman reports in, "Americans Believe Muslims Are Among Those Most Discriminated Against," that, "A poll by the Pew Research Center revealed that, in the eyes of Americans, Muslims are second only to homosexuals as the group of people most discriminated against." Zaman also notes, "the number of Americans who believe Islam preaches violence has dropped seven points to 38 percent."

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

- Weather forecasters have warned against more heavy rains and possible floods Friday in Turkey's Marmara region.

- Prime Minister Erdogan said illegally constructed houses will be demolished to prevent new disasters in Istanbul.

- Opposition CHP leader Deniz Baykal said the flood disaster in Istanbul was caused by corrupt urbanization and "scandalous" new settlement zones. Baykal lashed out at PM Erdogan, saying he was "in charge" of the city over the last 16 years.

- Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is scheduled to visit Ankara on September 16 to attend an Iftar fast-breaking dinner hosted by Prime Minister Erdogan's AK Party. In Ankara, Assad will hold talks with Erdogan, President Gul and Foreign Minister Davutoglu.

- A 4.5-magnitude earthquake is reported in the province of Konya.

- Turkey's economy has contracted by 7 percent in the second quarter of the year.

- IMF has voiced hopes that a new deal with Turkey will be sealed without delay.

World

- State Department Spokesman PJ Crowley said Iran's proposal for resolving the nuclear dispute was addressing U.S. concerns.
- Azerbaijan, Turkey and Israel are holding talks to produce armored vehicles jointly.
- The Czech Constitutional Court ruled Thursday that early national elections scheduled for October 9-10 will not take place.
- French President Sarkozy, in an effort to fight global warming, proposes a tax on fossil fuels such as gasoline and heating oil.

SILLIMAN